

We support media diversity: a civic, democratic society is dependent on free, open debate in all media markets.

We are writing to you apropos Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, we strongly advise the FCC to retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. Without this, we face increasing monopoly in media ownership that invalidates the civic, democratic society. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry and an ideological control of the consciousness of our citizenry that inverts a viable democracy -- the goals of which are both freedom and justice. When freedom is eclipsed, unity derives from oligarchical control of the processes of government.

We do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited. It is the narrowing of view, of imagination, of vision, of diversity of thought that gives rise to ideology instead of thought that seeks truthfulness and goodness in the solution to our human problems.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Respectuflly submitted as we face new and daunting problems in sustaining a civic, democratic society that derives, in part, from the mid-twentieth century -- a communications revolution that has the power to eclipse independent thought and that tends to sever us from the moral and worldly wisdom passed down to us from the past.

Sincerely,  
Margaret & Vincent Lombardi

